

# Forest Industry Safety Alert

## Log loader cab penetrated by "hitchhiker" log; Window guard prevents injury to operator inside

**Location:** Southern Vancouver Island

**Date of Incident / Close Call:** April 29, 2014

**Details of Incident / Close Call:** A potential high severity close call occurred in TimberWest South Island Operations recently, when a hydraulic log loader pulling logs from a grapple yarder deck on the high side of a road was struck in the side of the cab with a "hitchhiker" log.

As the loader grappled a 24m (80') log and began to swing it around to position it for processing, a second "hitchhiker" log of equal size came along for the ride and struck the side of the cab. The operator was concentrating on the log in the grapple and failed to recognize the "hitchhiker" coming towards the loader.

The log penetrated the cab window making contact with operator's seat, as well as the operators left side ribs before being stopped by the cab window guarding. Fortunately the operator was uninjured.



### Learnings and Suggestions:

- Review loading Safe Work Procedures (SWP's) and ensure loading from decks is thoroughly covered.
- Operators need to assess the whole deck before commencing operations, particularly where it's difficult to see the back of the deck.
- Recognize that yarding full length timber downhill and top first tends to increase the slope of log decks.
- Assess for changing conditions – (sap running may have been a contributing factor).
- Equipment positioning is critical even in the simplest situations – never be complacent.
- Be aware of the importance of cab guarding being in proper order.

NOTE: Forest Industry Safety Alerts are voluntarily submitted by workers or companies. The BC Forest Safety Council is not responsible for accuracy of content. Please contact the contributing source regarding incident details. We encourage the sharing of information that can help improve safety for all workers in forestry.

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